

*TOWN OF TIVERTON RHODE ISLAND*

*HARBOR COMMISSION*

*343 HIGHLAND ROAD  
TIVERTON RHODE ISLAND 02878*

*John McEwing, Chairman  
David Stewart, Vice-Chairman  
Harris Gruber, Secretary  
Bob Dixon  
Roger Winiarski  
Bruce Cox  
Dave Vannier, Harbormaster (ex-officio)*

*Contact: John McEwing  
Email: sv906905@netscape.net  
Telephone: 401-624-2276*

*REPORT OF SPECIAL MEETING*

*Date: May 27, 2010*

*Place: Tiverton Town Hall*

*1 – Review of proposal by George S. Alzaibak for alterations and modifications to his waterfront property (gas station) on Main Road, adjacent to Grinell's Beach and the Stone Bridge abutment.*

*MINUTES OF MEETING*

*Meeting was convened at 7:00 PM by Chairman John McEwing. All members of the THC were present: John McEwing, David Stewart, Harris Gruber, Bob Dixon, Roger Winiarski and Bruce Cox. Harbormaster Dave Vannier was also present. Petitioner George Alzaibak was also present.*

*The discussion and questions were wide-ranging , but all focused on Mr. Alzaibak's project. Much attention was paid to the history of the site and Mr. Alzaibak's long-time operation there, first as a leaseholder and more recently as sole owner of the property.*

*Mr. Alzaibak's background as an auto mechanic was pointed out. He has another similar gas station on Stafford Road, just east of Bliss Corners (on RI Route 81, just east of RI Route 177).*

*Though the Main Road location has been run for many years as both a gas station and a repair shop, Mr. Alzaibak proposes to alter the nature of the facility somewhat, to eliminate the repair shop function and to instead enhance and upgrade the snack shop capabilities, while retaining the gasoline sales function. Numerous architectural improvements are proposed and were displayed with drawings and an artist's rendering of the proposal.*

*A discussion ensued regarding the history and background of the property. Of especial interest were remarks made by Roger Winiarski and Bob Dixon, each of whom has lived in Tiverton for over 50 years; Bob Dixon was born here and was brought up on Riverside Drive. Roger Winiarski's family moved here when he was a small boy. Both have been intimately connected with the Tiverton waterfront their entire lives. From them, we were reminded that the site once housed Grinnell's Store, a two-story building that was a general store and hardware. It also had gas pumps out in front as far back as anyone can remember. As a hardware store, it was the old-fashioned type (current in its time), where loose sizes of nails and screws were picked by hand from open bins, put in paper bags and sold by the pound. For a time in Tiverton's history, a trolley ran down the main artery on tracks, making regular stops at Grinnell's Store before proceeding across the then-Route 138 Bridge to Portsmouth.*

*This discussion was considered germane to the proposal because the site has a long history as a commercial establishment. John McEwing reported receiving three phone calls from citizens (he declined to name them) who object to Mr. Alzaibak's proposal on the grounds that there should be no business at all at this unusual location, with its prominence on the Tiverton-Sakonnet River shoreline. Presumably, they would propose some civic use for the property, because of its unique location. But the members felt that it would be highly unlikely that any beautification project that might be proposed would ever come to fruition, notwithstanding that the property is privately owned at this time.*

*Mr. Alzaibak proposes to cease auto repairs at the site, while retaining the gasoline sales and enhancing the snack shop capabilities, to include the sale of hot dogs, hamburgers, pizza, and ice cream, all for take-out service, as well as a wide variety of convenience items; he proposes no seating facilities or drive-up window service. He has numerous permits in hand for most of the goods he dispenses at this time or plans to, and is in discussions with the Building Inspector regarding whatever modifications may be required to these permits, if any, to encompass his future plans.*

*For many years, at his own expense of time and labor, Mr. Albaizak has maintained the bathrooms at Grinnell's Beach, next door, and himself taken on the chore of making sure that the trash containers on the beach itself have been emptied in a*

*timely manner, as well as the beach being “policed” for stray trash. He has often been deeply involved in Town-wide projects to enhance the area, including at least one waterfront festival to raise funds for such improvements, of which he was co-chairman. His proposal includes the donation of eight picnic tables for Grinnell's Beach itself.*

*His plans and drawings show a tasteful remodeling of the building facia and all other outside walls, with the former Getty-mandated rectangular canopy over the gas pumps to eventually have a peaked shingled roof to match the building itself. However, since the canopy proposed will be much heavier than the existing one and will thus require substantially more support, he is not sure how soon he will be able to afford to alter that particular structure. In addition, the signage will be at ground level, executed in granite for maximum esthetic effect.*

*The question of the in-ground tanks arose. Mr. Alzaibak stated that the tanks were replaced with new, double-walled steel tanks in 1998. They have sensors within the tanks and also in the ground around the tanks, to monitor for leaks or other anomalies that may occur.*

*When asked what his plans would be, should his request be denied, Mr. Alzaibak opined that he could continue to operate it as a repair shop, which has been profitable for him in the past. He would also entertain selling the property, if the price offered were attractive enough. His preference is to make the requested modifications, envisioning both a profitable operation of a somewhat different nature and a handsome change that would also be a benefit for the Town.*

*An overriding consideration during the meeting was that compared to any other business that might be considered for the site and the reality that any other use was highly unlikely in the foreseeable future, Mr. Alzaibak's proposal appears to make a great deal of sense to the Commission. His proposal seems consistent with the continued enhancement of the area and the upgrading of numerous area buildings over the years. Also, the contributions to the Town's tax revenues was taken into consideration.*

*The Harbor Commission voted unanimously to approve Mr. Alzaibak's proposal.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.*

*Respectfully submitted – Harris Gruber, Secretary*

*All residents and other interested parties are invited to attend any of our meetings and to provide pertinent input. If you would like to receive email/mailed copies of our Agendas and Minutes, please contact: Harris Gruber, Secretary [varnishman@cox.net](mailto:varnishman@cox.net) or 843-906-6682.*